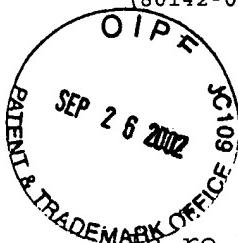


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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Patent Application of

Steven R. Boal

Art Unit: 3622

Application No. 09/451,160

Examiner: D. Champagne

Filed: November 30, 1999

For: ELECTRONIC COUPON DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

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Sir:

This is in full and timely response to the non-final Office Action mailed on August 27, 2002. Reexamination in light of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-18 and 22-25 are pending in this application, with claims 24 being independent. No new matter has been added.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 24 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being allegedly being obvious over U.S. Patent 6,385,591 issued to Mankoff in view of Sutherland ("Promotion Profile", Marketing &

Media Decisions, Vol. 24, No. 10, October 1989, p. 103) and U.S.
Patent 6,298,446 issued to Schreiber et al. (Schreiber).

Claims 1-6, 9-18, 22 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C.
103 as being allegedly being obvious over Mankoff in view of
Sutherland and Schreiber, and in further view of "Emaginet Plans
To 'Push' Its Way Into Consumer Mindset, Pocketbook," Interactive
Marketing News, v4, n22, May 30, 1997 (Emaginet).

Claims 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being
allegedly being obvious over Mankoff in view of Sutherland and
Schreiber, in view of Emaginet, and in further view of U.S.
Patent No. 6,006,269 issued to Phaal.

These rejections are respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

Independent claim 24 is drawn to a method of secure electronic coupon distribution, claims 1-18, 22-23 and 25 are dependent upon claim 24. Claim 24 includes the steps of associating a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) including a promotional code with a coupon; displaying the coupon to a user;

disabling access to the URL by the user; and invoking the URL with a browser to thereby enable the user to redeem the coupon.

Column 1, lines 28-36 of Mankoff arguably teaches that:

It is known in the art to display product or service coupons on pages that are available through the Internet's World Wide Web information retrieval system. A user of a computer may access those pages through use of a conventional Web browser. The user navigates to a given page, which is then saved to a file or printed. The hard copy of the coupon may then be carried by the user directly to a retail location and used to receive a discount on a given purchase.

Arguably, column 1, lines 50-58 of Mankoff teaches contact information associated with the coupon provider (e.g., address, web site URL, map and e-mail information) as automatically written to the PDA contact file.

Mankoff, at column 2, lines 61-65, arguably teaches that the web server supports files (collectively referred to as a web site) in the form of hypertext documents and objects, and that a network path to a server is identified by a so-called Uniform Resource Locator (URL).

Nevertheless, Mankoff fails to disclose, teach or suggest the claimed feature of disabling access to the URL by the user.

Support for this feature is provided within the specification as originally filed. Specifically, page 17, lines 21-28 of the specification provides that:

Client application 28 disables access to the invoked URL/code. For example, moving the mouse arrow over the coupon/ad does not cause the URL to be displayed, nor is "right-button clicking" operative to allow capture of the URL. Accordingly, the specified URL (and code) is neither displayed nor available, and cannot be discovered by, for example, "right-clicking" on coupon display 76, like conventional web-based e-coupon distribution systems.

Sutherland arguably makes a reference to "electronic coupon scanning." Nevertheless, Sutherland is silent as to the claimed feature of disabling access to the URL by the user.

Schreiber arguably teaches a method and system for copyright protection of digital images. Schreiber provides that SafeMedia includes enhanced system control for preventing screen capture by disabling a clipboard (column 2, lines 27-30), provides that other prior art techniques for protecting digital images use Java applets within web browsers to disable the menu that pops up when a user right clicks on a displayed image within his web browser (column 2, lines 37-40), and provides the disablement of the user's ability to save an image being displayed and the non-enablement of the user to save image data (column 7, lines 58-

60). Column 25, lines 34-37 of Schreiber further provides for parameters that are disabled so that they cannot be edited. They indicate the DLL version of the copyright protection software, the Netscape version and the ActiveX version, respectively. Also described within Schreiber are the disablement of the DELETE button (column 26, lines 46-47) and the disablement of the REMOVE button (column 27, lines 18-25). Yet, the claimed feature of disabling access to the URL by the user is also not found within Schreiber.

The non-final Office Action also fails to highlight the particular teaching within the cited prior art that is relied upon for the claimed feature of disabling access to the URL by the user.

Withdrawal of these rejections and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, all the claims now pending in the present application are allowable, and the present application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reexamination and reconsideration of the application in light of the amendments

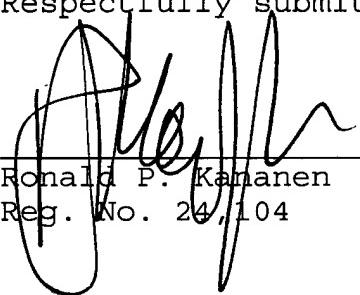
and remarks is courteously solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments or suggestions that could place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the below-listed number.

DATE: September 26, 2002

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Respectfully submitted,


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